



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

247 centre street floor 2 nyc ny 10013

p 212.274.1989 • f 212.274.1644 • <http://www.zeitgeistfilms.com/DVDpressroom>

For home media requests contact Elizabeth McKee at elizabeth@zeitgeistfilms.com

MAGGIE CHEUNG HAUNTS PARIS BY NIGHT IN CULT FAVE "IRMA VEP" ON NEW ZEITGEIST DVD

New York (October 8, 2008) — Commemorating their 20th anniversary, Zeitgeist bows **Olivier Assayas'** **IRMA VEP** in a new **Essential Edition** on **December 9, 2008**.

Olivier Assayas (*Boarding Gate*, *Summer Hours*) has been an integral part of the new New Wave of French cinema (along with Claire Denis and Arnaud Desplechin) since appearing on the international arthouse scene with 1994's explosive *Cold Water*. In **IRMA VEP** he cast his soon-to-be wife **Maggie Cheung** (*Ashes of Time Redux*, *In the Mood for Love*) and *nouvelle vague* legend **Jean-Pierre Léaud** in a spiky satire of the modern French film industry and a moving contemplation on being alone in a strange city.

Maggie Cheung, playing herself, arrives in Paris to star in a remake of Louis Feuillade's classic silent *Les Vampires*. The film's past-his-prime director René Vidal (Léaud) had seen Cheung in the Johnny To cult-actioner *Heroic Trio* and is convinced only she can play the mysterious, modern gangster-leader Irma Vep.

Unable to speak a word of French, Cheung tries to navigate the increasingly disorganized production while clad in a head-to-toe rubber catsuit and juggling cryptic direction from Vidal, a lovesick bi-sexual costumer (Nathalie Richard), a gossipy executive's wife (Bulle Ogier) and the whole backbiting Parisian crew. With freewheeling shots choreographed to the strains of **Sonic Youth** and **Luna**, **IRMA VEP** immerses the viewer into the heady desperation and *amour fou* of modern moviemaking.

The **Essential Edition** of **IRMA VEP** features a **16:9 anamorphic master** available for the first time in North America. Supplemental materials include a **feature-length audio commentary** of a discussion with Olivier Assayas and *Cahiers du cinéma* editor Jean-Michel Frodon; thirty minutes of **never-before-seen on-set footage**, with an additional audio essay by Assayas and Frodon; "Man Yuk: A Portrait of Maggie Cheung" (1997), **a short film by Assayas**; black-and-white **rushes** of Cheung as Irma Vep on Parisian rooftops; the original French theatrical trailer; and optional English subtitles for the deaf and hearing impaired. The packaging features a **deluxe 20-page booklet** with newly-translated **essays by Assayas** on Maggie Cheung and Louis Feuillade and an appreciation by critic **Kent Jones**.

IRMA VEP Film/DVD info: 1997 • 96 minutes • France • Color • In English and French with English subtitles • 1.66:1 original theatrical aspect ratio • Not Rated • Cat. No. Z1109 • UPC 795975110938 • SRP \$29.99

Celebrating its 20th Anniversary as one of America's preeminent independent distributors, New York-based Zeitgeist Films has built an impressively diverse catalogue of foreign, documentary and arthouse titles by such renowned directors as Todd Haynes, Jan Svankmajer, Peter Greenaway, Abbas Kiarostami, Guy Maddin, Kirby Dick, Atom Egoyan, Agnès Varda, François Ozon, Derek Jarman, Yvonne Rainer, Olivier Assayas, Philippe Garrel and the Quay Brothers. Recent releases include Oscar winner *Nowhere in Africa*; blockbuster doc *The Corporation*; dance doc hit *Ballets Russes*; Oscar nominee *Sophie Scholl—The Final Days*; Oscar nominee *My Country, My Country*; Sundance winner *Into Great Silence*; *Caméra d'Or* winner *Jellyfish*; and 2008 Golden Gate Award winner *Up the Yangtze*. Launched in 2001, Zeitgeist Video has released dozens of highly praised DVDs, including the recently-released remastered Two-Disc Collector's Edition of Quay Brothers shorts, entitled PHANTOM MUSEUMS; and a Four-Disc Box Set of Derek Jarman masterworks entitled GLITTERBOX, starring Oscar winner Tilda Swinton (*Michael Clayton*).



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

247 centre street floor 2 nyc ny 10013
p 212.274.1989 • f 212.274.1644 • <http://www.zeitgeistfilms.com/DVDpressroom>
For home media requests contact Elizabeth McKee at elizabeth@zeitgeistfilms.com

CRITICAL ACCLAIM FOR *IRMA VEP*

"A flash of cinematic brilliance!" —Thelma Adams, *New York Post*

"Breathless and supercool! Cheung...is an enchantress so radiant, genuine, and sexy you feel like you might herniate something just looking at her." —Michael Atkinson, *SPIN*

"Maggie Cheung has charm to burn! She's one of the world's great movie stars, and I'd go to a movie house just to watch her breathe." —John Powers, *Vogue*

"★★★★! Shot in Super 16mm, Assayas's film has an off-the-cuff, almost improvisatory feel, but the touch of an exacting, vital filmmaker is obvious every step of the way. And Cheung, slinking around the corridors of her hotel in her sheath of shiny black latex to the dissonant chords of Sonic Youth, is an instant icon of everything cool." —Ken Fox, *TV Guide*

"What this movie is really about is cinema as possibility; from its remarkable opening tracking shot to the animated images scratched directly onto film at its end, every breathtaking frame celebrates what movies can do." —*Entertainment Weekly*

"Wildly beautiful! Assayas recaptures the exuberance and wit of French Cinema."
—David Denby, *New York Magazine*

"A jagged, speedy rap fueled by coffee, cigarettes, and insomnia!" —J. Hoberman, *The Village Voice*

"★★★★ Masterpiece! Creepy and hip, fast moving and provocative..."
—Jonathan Rosenbaum, *Chicago Reader*

"There's not a false note in *Irma Vep*, not one wasted image, nor one superfluous move of the camera.... [Assayas discovered] a native cinema as querulous, alive and magical as it was once upon a time."
—Manohla Dargis, *LA Weekly*

"One of the strangest and funniest movies about moviemaking ever. Its delights aren't merely cerebral: the French picture does, afterall, showcase Maggie Cheung in a skintight catsuit." —*Premiere*

"Through director Oliver Assayas's satiric, even subversive gaze, we feel as if we're ducking behind the cameras for the first time. Every burst of bitchy gossip, every creative hissy fit and every pretentious gesture feels ticklish and original." —*Washington Post*

"Captures the larcenous, heartbreaking allure of cinema itself.... Assayas affirms that for viewers and filmmakers alike, movies are still worth believing in." —Stephanie Zacharek, *Salon*

"No better commentary on the state of cinema today could be found...a deliciously knowing comedy about the insanity of shooting a film." —Philip Lopate, *Film Comment*

"A curious conflation of *Day for Night*, *To Catch a Thief*, and *Batman Returns*. More curious still, the mixture works." —Anthony Lane, *The New Yorker*

"A film of such spontaneity, freshness and breezy chaos that you feel as if it were assembled from happy accidents and inspired, seat-of-the-pants improvisation. Assayas' camera style—natural, fluid, deliciously intrusive—deserves much of the credit for those qualities." —*San Francisco Chronicle*